

MCCC NEWS

\$1.00

Mid-Cities Commodore Club, Inc.

June 85

Vol. 3

Issue 6

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

BILL RAECKE

The Jim Butterfield weekend is over. It was, by far, the biggest project that the MCCC has ever attempted, and now it's time to review just how well it went and to decide if it was worth the effort and expense.

The weekend started with a bang. I knew something was wrong when I arrived Friday evening for the banquet and found Harold and Judy Williams sitting in the Western Hills Inn lobby. Harold kept telling me to sit down. It seems that the room which we were supposed to occupy was already taken by the Mid-Cities Rose Society. The kitchen had prepared only one banquet meal and was faced with two groups of people to feed. After they revived me, I was led back to a little room resembling a hallway with two doors and was told that this was our new banquet facility.

To make a long story short, they did manage to fit fifty people into the room and they did manage to feed us well by serving steak and baked potato instead of the buffet which they were scheduled to serve. Other than the fact that no-one could move, we all had a good time.

Thankfully, the rest of the weekend went more smoothly. The workshop sessions by Jim Butterfield were excellent. I know I learned a great deal from all of them. And, on Saturday evening we were treated to a very entertaining evening by both Mr. Butterfield and Pete Baczor, the new Commodore User Group Coordinator. We got a first peek at the new C128. By

the time this article appears in print, the C128 should be available in limited quantities in local stores along with the 1571 disk drive.

Was the weekend worth all the trouble and expense? Only you can answer that for certain. If anyone has any comments I will be glad to listen. In the meantime, I can only go by my own opinion and the opinions of others who attended.

Yes, it was worth it.

BUTTERFIELD SEMINAR/EXPENSE REPORT:

EXPENSES: Jim Butterfield

Fee	\$ 600.00
Plane	350.00
Room	185.00

Western Hills Inn

Banquet	776.00
Tea and Coffee	238.00
Room Rental	500.00
Ticket Printing	25.00
Handouts	20.00

\$ 2694.00 Total Expenses

INCOME: Ticket Sales

Scope	\$ 970.00
MCCC	1135.00

\$ 2105.00 Total Income

NET COST:

Scope	\$ 235.00
MCCC	354.00

\$ 589.00 Net Cost

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The MID-CITIES COMMODORE CLUB is a non-profit organization devoted to the collection and dissemination of computer knowledge, to the encouragement of computer education and to the use of Commodore computers in the home, at school and in business. Appropriate and legal use of all types of software is encouraged by this club.

The MCCC is not connected with Commodore Business Machines Ltd. or Commodore Inc. Commodore and Commodore product names (PET, CBM, VIC and C64) are registered trademarks of Commodore Inc.

Our meetings are open to all. Yearly membership dues are \$20.00 and entitle the member to a monthly mailed copy of the MCCC NEWS, the club newsletter, library copying privileges, attendance at any or all chapter and club meetings as well as participation in club-sponsored classes. Dues are paid on a calendar year basis and new members who join after March 31 of each year pay prorated dues for the months remaining.

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The MCCC NEWS accepts advertising from both members and from commercial establishments. Member rates are free for classified ads. These ads must be computer related and not of a commercial nature. A commercial ad is defined as one where you are running a business and are selling the same item or items to many people. Members submitting such ads will be charged commercial rates.

COMMERCIAL RATES are as follows:
\$60.00 per full page ad, \$30.00 per half page ad, \$20.00 per quarter page ad and \$10.00 per business card. Non-members will pay commercial rates.

The deadline for submissions to the MCCC NEWS is the third Saturday of each month. PAYMENT MUST ACCOMPANY CAMERA-READY AD COPY. Make all checks payable to Mid-Cities Commodore Club and mail to MCCC NEWS, P.O. Box 1578, Bedford, Texas 76021.

MEETINGS

June 1 Board of Directors Mtg. 10 AM
Western Hills Inn

June 8 Arlington Chapter 9:00 AM
Arlington Community Ctr.
Vandergriff Park

Grand Prairie Chapter 1:30 PM
Grand Prairie Public Library

June 15 HEB Chapter Meeting 1:30 PM
Hurst Recreation Center

Ft. Worth Chapter 1:30 PM
General Dynamics Rec. Area

June 15th is the
Newsletter Deadline
for the JULY Issue.

JUNE

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2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						



June 17 Ft. Worth Night Chapter 7 PM
St. Elizabeth Episcopal Church
5910 Black Oak
River Oaks Addition

June 18 Grand Prairie Chapter 6 PM
Grand Prairie Public Library



COMING UP



ON-LINE

COPYRIGHT 1985 BY PAUL MOTISE
ROCKVILLE COMMODORE USERS GROUP

On-Line Yellow Pages: Imagine a free 24 hour public data base of retailers and wholesalers of products and services from across the United States, an on-line yellow pages, if you will; no sign up, connect or long distance charges, no passwords or user id's. That's the concept behind a service called TelCor America, of the Business Electronic Listing Corporation, Box 40206, Cleveland, Ohio 44140. Their computer can be reached at 800-231-3158 (Ohio residents can call 800-223-5541). Use 8 bit word size, no parity, one stop bit, full duplex and either 300 or 1200 baud. TelCor's people can be reached 9AM-5PM EST, Monday thru Friday at 216-327-1623; you'll have to pay for the phone call to humans.

TelCor America has been on-line for about a year, but has begun strong advertising only recently. The service does have limitations. Callers are restricted to six minutes per session, and the system can handle but a few callers at a time. Yes, the line is most always busy; however, a redial-on-busy routine should get you thru in less than ten minutes. Fortunately, the firm plans to install several upgrades which should be in place by the time you read this. The upgrades, according to TelCor's manager, Mr. Duke Gower, include additional lines and master program revisions. Gower told me that the firm intends to keep the access free, but won't likely change the current time constraint.

I tried the service and was pleased, despite a few glitches and limits. Here's what I found and what you should do, at least for now, when you go on-line with TelCor America. Keep in mind that the service is in the midst of making extensive changes. Once you are connected, the system adjusts to your baud rate, and asks if you accept lower case text. You will then be asked to enter your name. If your name isn't found on their user file, you will be prompted for computer/modem type, city and state, and how you learned of TelCor. If your name is found you will be told how many times you have logged on to the service. Lack of user identifica-

tion codes is, in my view, a weakness and potential problem. Specifically, the company cannot distinguish people who have the same name; therefore, if your name matches that of an existing user you may be surprised at your first session to be welcomed back for, say, the tenth time! As a further complication, should your namesake log off while in the expert mode, you could be logged on in the same mode and may have some difficulty figuring out how to get to an explanatory main menu.

Unlike some other information services, declaring your computer type apparently has nothing to do with how text will be displayed on your screen. TelCor defaults to 64 column format. This should pose no real hardship, however, because bulletins, help menus and firm listings take up 40 columns at most. The company used to have a margin-adjust command, but it didn't work.

After logon, a short main (Marketing) menu is displayed. First time callers should enter "B" (for bulletins) at the first selection prompt. Be sure to capture the bulletins, especially those that introduce and explain the service. Save the main menu, too, so you can switch to the E(xpert) mode as soon as you can to save precious connect time.

Finding firms in TelCor's data base is similar to using a phone directory. First, at the selection prompt, enter "F" (for find listings). You'll be asked to enter a key word, called a general category, to select a market. For instance, enter "computer" to find a modem manufacturer; you wouldn't find anything listed under "modem" in the yellow pages and the same holds true for this data base. Next, you will be prompted for city and state, should you wish to narrow your search geographically; hitting RETURN alone causes a search of all cities and/or states.

At this point TelCor displays the first category corresponding to your key word, and asks if you want firm listings for it; answer "no" and you are asked if you want to search for more categories, whereas a "yes" brings on the next category and prompt, and so on. I find this procedure to be awkward and time consuming because categories are presented individually, in alphabetical order and you must respond to two prompts between each category shown; also, callers have no

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Larry Wallace
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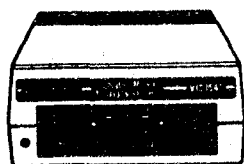
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way of knowing ahead of time exactly how many categories are waiting to be displayed.

When you see a category that matches your needs, enter "y" at the listing prompt. The first listing (firm name, address and phone number) will then be displayed, along with a continuation prompt; a "yes" here unleashes the next listing and prompt, until there are no more matches. Here again, intervening prompts and lack of totals ahead of time can be frustrating.

The data base, though useful, is by no means exhaustive. My hunt for Maryland computer dealers drew a blank. However, a key word "paper" unfurled 35 alphabetized categories, ranging from "Advertising Reps., Newspaper" to "Wastepaper Wholesalers". My search for newspaper publishers in Maryland turned up only two--"Susquehanna" and the "Jewish Times." A call for "all" such publishers in the

U.S. uncovered 36, including the Los Angeles Times; the full list of firms was presented in no discernible order. Mr. Gower remarked that he was not at liberty to say how many firms are in the data base; hopefully more firms will enroll.

Log off by entering G (Goodbye) at the selection prompt. TelCor politely disconnects you after six minutes, but will let you run overtime if you are in the midst of a firm listing.

I believe that the concept of a free on-line yellow pages is outstanding. While far from perfect, the pioneering TelCor is a good start and deserves high praise. Progressive companies would do well to look into listing with the service. For telecomputing enthusiasts, TelCor America offers an inexpensive, painless introduction to on-line data bases, and some useful information. Anybody want the number for the L.A. Times?

POLITE DOS

COPYRIGHT 1985 BY BILLIAM CORONEL

Commodore's new B128, their recently announced upgrade to the popular 64 computer, will use a new operating system called Polite Dos which the company promises will redefine the term User Friendly. The system, designed using guidelines of Emily Post's famous book of Etiquette, forces friendly interaction between the user and the computer by demanding that commands include words like PLEASE and THANK YOU.

Although not completed at press time, the following will give a brief idea of Polite Dos's format.

To get a listing of files, rather than typing the standard:

A> DIR

You would type instead:

A> DIR PLEASE

Then, after the listing is given, the computer will freeze up and not perform

another task until you type:

A> THANK YOU

In return for YOUR friendliness the computer will be just as polite to you. In Basic programs, for example, error messages will not be nearly as cryptic. Rather than simply:

SYNTAX ERROR

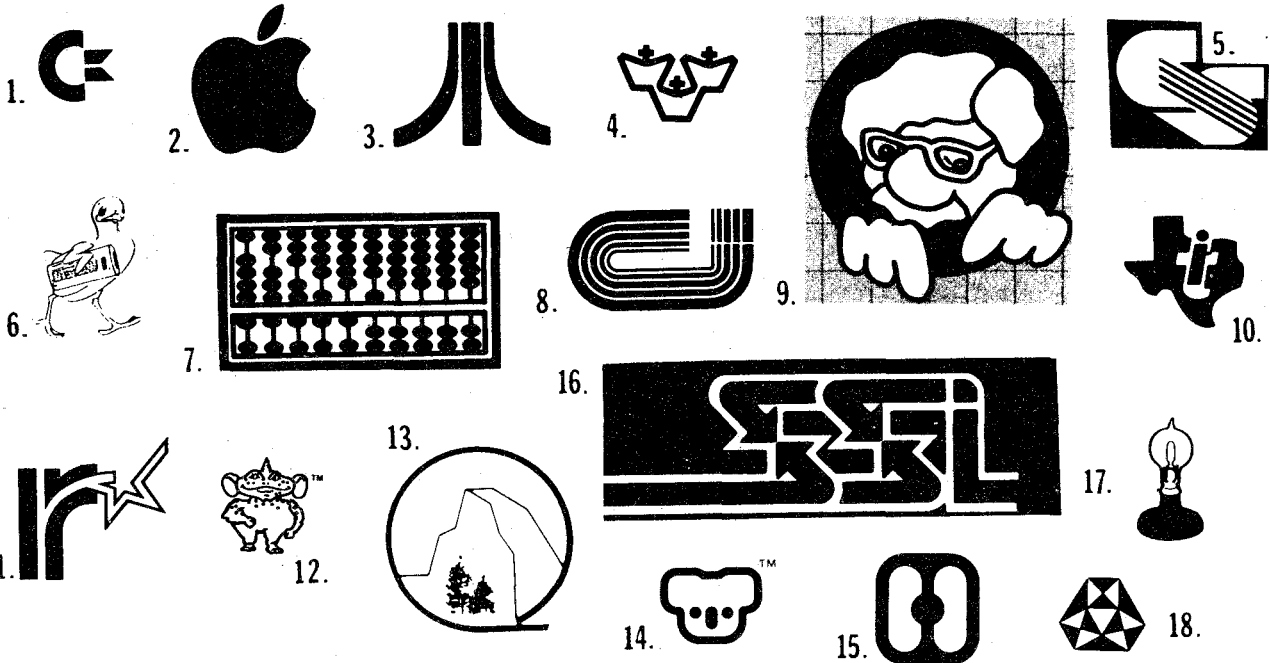
The computer will instead display:
YOU ENTERED SOMETHING WRONG BUT DON'T WORRY BECAUSE IT HAPPENS TO A LOT OF PEOPLE. IT WAS PROBABLY MY FAULT ANYWAY SINCE THE MANUAL DIDN'T COVER THAT TOPIC FULLY ENOUGH. IF YOU FEEL UP TO IT YOU CAN TRY AGAIN NOW OR MAYBE TAKE A BREAK AND GET SOME LUNCH. IN EITHER CASE - HAVE A NICE DAY.

Ed. Note. Billiam Coronel publishes an Online Computer/Comedy Newsletter called COMEDY BY WIRE which is available through THE SOURCE (Public 153 Direct) and DELPHI (Infomania section under newsletters) databases.

LITERACY TEST

Barbara Cramer

Computer literacy can be measured in many different ways. Can you name all 18 companies represented by the logos (or partial logo) below? Score your answers any way you wish but if you miss 1, 2 or 3, you'd better give up and find a new hobby! Answers appear on page 11.

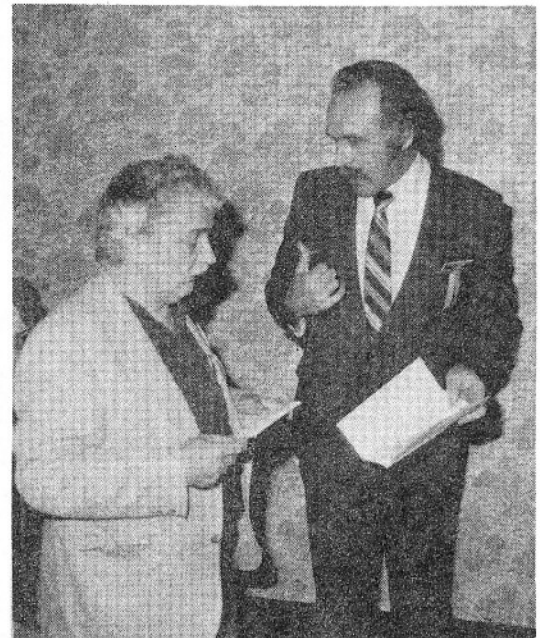
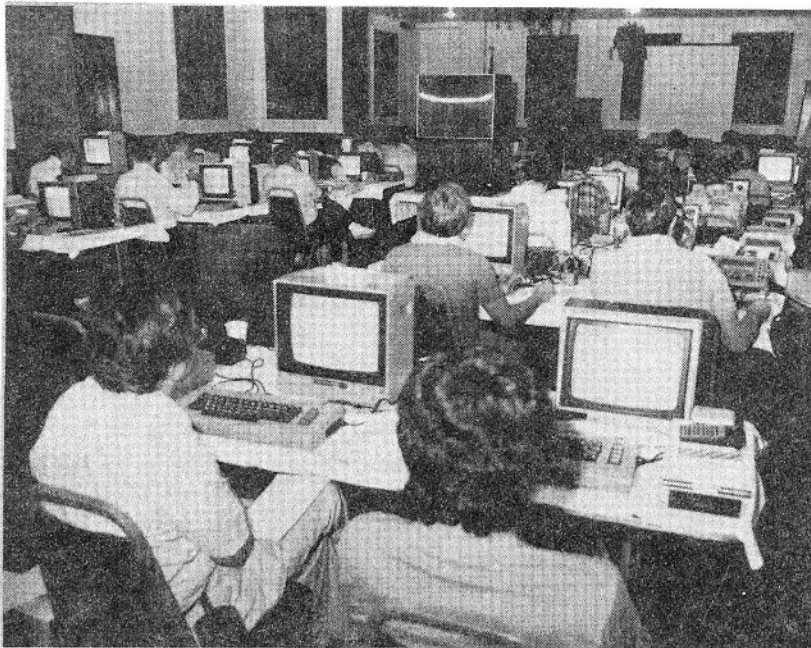




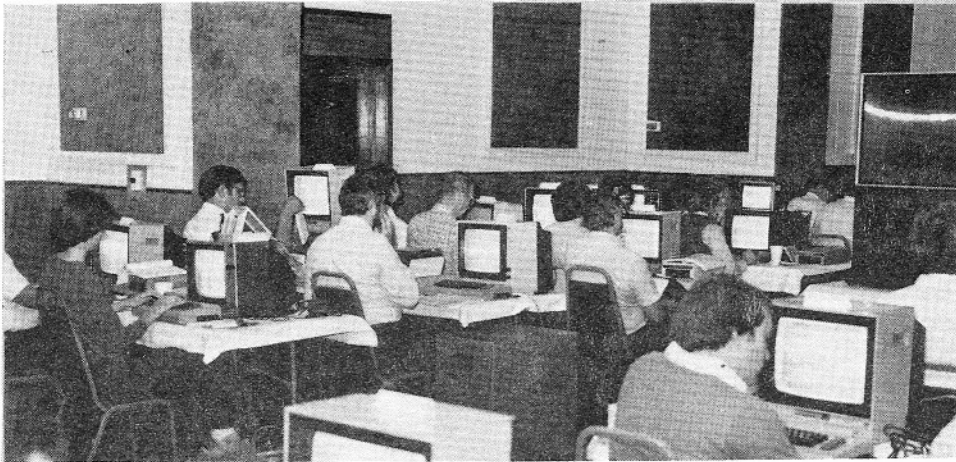
JIM BUTTERFIELD IN THE METROPLEX



On May 10-12, Commodore wizard, James Butterfield, came to the Metroplex under the sponsorship of the MCCC and SCOPE User Groups. Meeting at the Western Hills Inn, the events included an informal banquet, an entertaining lecture and learning sessions on



topics from file handling to machine language. We were also introduced to the new C128 by Pete Baczor who also provided answers to a variety of questions from the floor. Perhaps the most important piece of information we learned was the toll-free phone number for CUSTOMER SUPPORT: 1-800-247-9000.

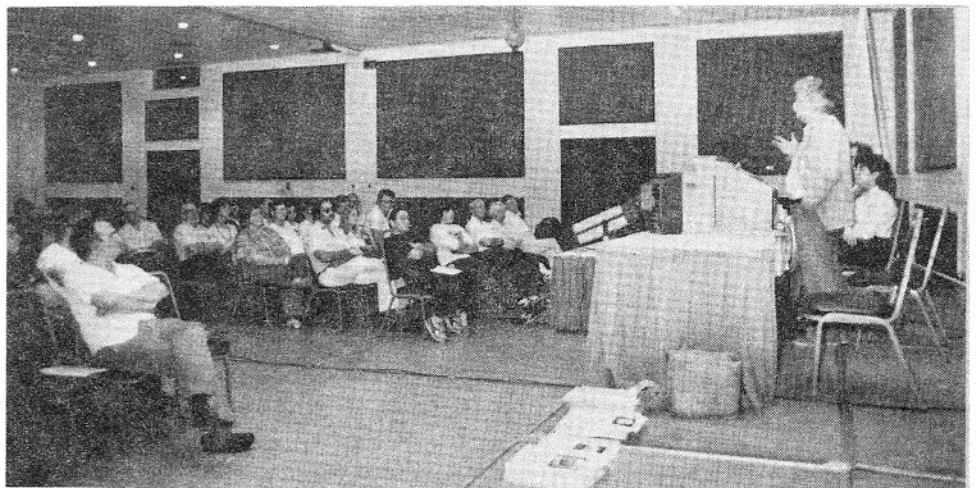


Left: MCCC & SCOPE members prepare for the ML session. Get your Assembly Language Monitors ready!

Below: Jim Butterfield (seated) relaxes before the busy weekend activities. (Standing from Left to Rt.) Bruce Nelson-Treasurer, Bill Raecke-President and Garry Mordeiman-Ed. Chrmn.



Above: Pete Baczor, Commodore's newly appointed User Group Coordinator
Right: Jim Butterfield offers opinions on the relationship of playing and programming games as well as the future of Commodore in general.





NEED REPAIRS?

There is a new network of Commodore Service Centers in operation across the country. Your equipment may now be taken to any RCA Authorized Service Center for repairs. At the same time, Commodore has discontinued the repair/replace policy at the main headquarters. The MCCC still recommends that you take your out-of-warranty equipment to Sof-Tex for repairs first. (See the ad elsewhere in this paper). The cost is likely to be much lower for club members and the service just as good.



HATS OFF!

Congratulations and thanks to Bill Raecke, Garry Wordelman, Harold Williams and Betty Clay for organizing the Jim Butterfield seminar. Plans and problems were handled very smoothly due to the careful attention of both MCCC and SCOPE officers.

The FASTLOAD cartridge by Epyx Software continues to be a topic of interest as we find its uses and limitations. While its editing and disk checking capabilities are outstanding, avoid using FASTLOAD for applications where files might be lost such as MultiPlan and The Print Shop. - Bruce Umbreit

HELP YOUR NEIGHBOR

Have you been wondering what to do with computer hardware, software, and books you no longer need? You can claim them as a tax deductible contribution if you donate them to C.C.A.D. (Center for Computer Assistance for the Disabled) located at 2501 Ave. J in Arlington. Contact them at (817) 640-6613 or see Robert Sessions of the Arlington Chapter. They have an immediate need for manuals, schematics, and technical help on early CBM and PET machines.



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REVIEWS REVIEWS REVIEWS



MCCC NEWS REVIEWS THE LATEST SOFTWARE
COURTESY OF BABBAGE'S AND FEDERATED/VIDEOLAND

ALCAZAR

The Forgotten Fortress
ACTIVISION SOFTWARE

This may very well be the best graphics/arcade adventure to date! The unique mix of the game is that you can't tell where the game ends and the graphics begin. Although this may sound abstract it is also what makes a good game GREAT!

With each step you take, look, listen, remember. One corner of one corridor of one castle alone may present several doors, an annoying fly, a smudged paw-print, a flickering flame and more. How you react to any one of those may mean the difference between recovering riches or resurrecting a rather vicious inhabitant, and believe me there are plenty of those in ALCAZAR.

The game starts with a map screen in which you venture through the countryside of ancient castles. Each castle has within it's walls fire breathing griffins, saber swinging guards, bottomless shafts and much much more. The game takes you through over twenty castles with hundreds of rooms, during which you will be called upon to decipher not only visual clues but unique audio clues with no visual identifier.

The bottom line in this game is survival, and to do that one will have to look, listen and remember. ALCAZAR by ACTIVISION SOFTWARE is a winner that should keep the whole family entertained for weeks!

BARBIE

EPYX SOFTWARE

BARBIE of BARBIE & KEN doll fame is now a computer game by Epyx Software. To most adults the idea of a computerized Barbie doll sounds absolutely ridiculous. For some reason G. I. Joe software doesn't sound nearly as silly as its feminine counterpart. While nothing will take the place of actual role playing games for children, Barbie and G. I.

Joe both provide an interesting addition and alternative.

Barbie's programmers allow you the opportunity to not only change wardrobe hairstyles and accessories, but the colors and designs of these elements. Other features of the 'game' include actual conversations with Ken and some fair animation of Barbie traveling about town.

I was fortunate to enlist the help of three neighborhood volunteers ranging in age from 5 to 8 years old. All of them had real Barbie dolls at home and enjoyed the idea of playing dolls on the computer. I am pleased to report that they enjoyed the program so much that I was forced to send them home long before they were finished playing. I'm afraid their parents will now have to cope with a Christmas list that includes a Commodore 64, monitor, disk drive and, oh yes, Barbie software.

The program does have a major limitation. It seems to me that there are simply not enough choices to keep youngsters interested over a period of months. Wardrobe, colors and pattern choices become boring once you have tried the possibilities. The dialog and 'action' of the program is also quite repetitious. The program has a serious lack of human intervention. Perhaps Barbie is best left to the 3 dimensional world where children's imagination can lead to more creative play.

SPEEDSCRIPT 3.0

By Warren Kossmann

Reprinted from the Catalina Commodore Computer Club, Tucson, Arizona

Those of you who have been using the original version of SpeedScript, which appeared in the January 1984 issue of Compute's Gazette, will be delighted with SpeedScript 3.0 which can be found in the March 1985 issue of Compute. The improvements which have been made are truly impressive!

Although the original version was

handy for most small word processing applications, it had a number of inherent flaws which made it irritating to use for more serious work. The new version is quite a different story. As a result of the changes and enhancements which have been made, the program can easily handle any word processing task, including professional applications!

Those who are familiar with the original version of the program have a distinct advantage since many of the original commands have been preserved in the updated version. The cursor controls work the same way they did before as do many of the other control key combinations. Some of the additions include an search and replace feature which allows the user to either replace selectively or automatically; a function which automatically inserts 255 spaces with one key combination; a function which removes all unwanted spaces with one key combination; a SHIFT/RETURN which not only ends the current paragraph, but adds a blank line between paragraphs and indents the cursor five spaces so that you can immediately start typing the next paragraph.

Some of the printer format additions include a linked file feature which allows the user to create very long documents such as manuscripts, etc.; a command which allows comments to be embedded within text which will be ignored by the printer; a page width command used for centering text; and several very nice page numbering commands which allow the user to select the starting page number or disable printing until a certain page number is reached.

I also like the enhancements to the CTRL P function which now give the user the option of printing to screen, disk, or printer. When the screen option is selected, you can see exactly where page breaks will occur. The disk option sends the document to the disk drive in sequential file format. Finally, the print option sends everything to the printer, and unlike the original version, there are no problems with extra linefeeds at the end of each page.

What do I think of SpeedScript 3.0? If this were a book, I would say that it should be required reading for everyone! Once the word gets around, the March 1985 issue of Compute is destined to become a

collector's item. Thanks to Compute and to Charles Brannon for a job well done!

CHIPWITS EPYX SOFTWARE

CHIPWITS, part of EPYX SOFTWARE'S "Learning Fun Series", is a game that teaches young children logical thinking. At the start of the game you are in the workshop, where you program your CHIPWIT for adventures. Your robot will be trained to look for pie or other various objects, including ones as strange as Electro-Crabs. Programming a Chipwit is easy, because the workshop has pictures that represent the actions he can perform. You can make a Chipwit move, eat a piece of pie or even sing a song!

When your program is ready, send Chipwit on any of eight different adventures. If he makes a mistake simply return to the workshop and change his programming. The more he learns the more your children will learn. The multiple displays make this programs concepts easy to understand. Although this game would be somewhat difficult for a preschooler it still is a must for children. Young teenagers would enjoy it also!

Reprinted from the Catalina Commodore
Computer Club, Tucson, Arizona

80 COLUMN COLOR TV

If you are thinking of buying an adapter or a program for your 64 that will give you 80 columns, a COLOR monitor or TV will almost definitely not give you an acceptable picture. A single phosphor screen (green, amber, white) monitor will be needed. -Tom D'Angelo

ASTERISKS

Watch out for Asterisks just before the type of file when you list a disk directory. It signifies that the file was not closed properly. It also means that you will mess up your disk if you continue to use it without VALIDATING the disk. To VALIDATE type (in direct mode):

OPEN15,8,15,"V":CLOSE15
(CAUTION- VALIDATE will eliminate any
RANDOM files on a disk.) -Tom D'Angelo

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CHAPTER NEWS

ARLINGTON

The June meeting will be held at 9 AM in the auditorium of the Community Center at Vandergriff Park. The program will be on educational software and will be presented by Mary Jones of American Data Systems. The auditorium has much more room than we will need, so bring your computers, friends, and yes, even your teacher. The chapter would like to thank Don Bennett for his in depth presentation on the Microsoft Multiplan package. According to Don, this powerful spreadsheet program works as well on the 64 as it does on the IBM PC or the DEC equipment he uses.

HURST-EULESS-BEDFORD

The HEB meeting will be held Saturday, June 15 at 1:30 PM at the Hurst Recreation Center. The program will include a presentation of educational software for upper level students.

LITERACY ANSWERS

1. Commodore 2. Apple 3. Atari 4. Broderbund Software 5. Creative Software 6. Tott Software 7. Abacus Software 8. Cardco, Inc. 9. Batteries Included 10. Texas Instruments 11. Star Micronics 12. Sirius Software 13. Sierra On-Line 14. Koala Technologies 15. Hayes 16. Strategic Simulations, Inc. 17. Skylas Electric Works 18. TDK

WEB DIMENSION

By RUSSELL LIEBLICH
ACTIVISION SOFTWARE

Web Dimension by Activision is a rather unique game. Although it has 8 levels with 3 phases each, it is not a game at all; it is more of an experience or event. Your character is represented by a musical note which moves in four directions around a three-dimensional spider web. Your job is first to 'freeze' each organism by arriving at a node of the web and pressing the joystick button when the creature passes by on his patterned rounds. When you have frozen all six organisms you automatically move to the second phase. Here your job is to connect the 'sparkles' (frozen organisms) without crossing your own path. According to the brief and flowery documentation, Phase 3 "moves you to the next level with a musical reward."

The graphics in Web Dimension are quite well done but do not bear much repetition and after playing 10 levels I did not feel musically rewarded more than twice. Following level 8 you continue to play the 'game' with repeats of other levels; there is no end. Neither, is score recorded for your skill. Upon making an error you are returned to the beginning of the current phase and level with no penalties. One level and reward looks and sounds very much like the ones that preceded it.

My advice would be to go to Babbage's in Northeast Mall and watch their videotape demonstration of Web Dimension. You will hear and see the whole 'experience' in 2 or 3 minutes.

Graphics in this newsletter were drawn using Doodle! and The Print Shop. Typestyles were created using FontMaster, a new word processing program by Xetec. Watch the next issue for a detailed review of this impressive new program.

G. I. JOE

EPYX SOFTWARE

G. I. JOE -- they should have called this game something other than that, because it's great! G.I. JOE is a combination of several familiar game types. It has a flight game with jets, a tank game fought on the ground, a helicopter sequence and more, including some close up combat scenes with one of twelve enemies that you select.

The game starts by checking the computerized World Hot Spot Map, which looks like it was taken right out of WARGAMES (the movie). The map is checked to locate the areas of COBRA activity. You pick the area that needs your help, and select the G.I. JOE who's best suited for the mission. Your choices range from RECONDO to TORPEDO to SNOW JOB and each one has his own area of expertise. The heat-loving jungle trooper RECONDO is best suited for battling DESTRO in the Amazon, but WILD BILL with his Assault Copter, Dragonfly, is your best bet if your headed for bush country. In all there are sixteen G. I. JOES to choose from, including the popular DUKE and STALKER. No matter who you choose survival is tough and the objective the same-to find, capture and destroy COBRA headquarters.

Overall G.I. JOE is an excellent game with many variables which make it an ongoing challenge.

Babbage's

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THEM WITH THE
CLUB MEMBERS.

Larry Groebe has recently accepted the position of Startext programmer for the Ft. Worth Star-Telegram. Continue to look for his excellent work in the next issue of the MCCC NEWS.

MCCC NEWS

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